THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) Survey for construction of a new line from Ghanauli to Baddi has been completed and survey report is under finalization by Northern Railway. Further decision regarding taking up of the project would be taken based on the results of the survey, once the survey report is received and examined in the Ministry.

Rail accident near Mathura

130. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of casualties due to an accident which occurred on 21st October, 2009 near Mathura where Goa Sampark Kranti Express collided with Mewar Express from the back end side which was standing few metres away from Bajwa Bridge at Bhooteshwar Station;

(b) whether Government has ordered a CBI inquiry in this rail accident;

(c) the amount of compensation declared by her Ministry to the family members of the deceased and injured in this rail accident; and

(d) whether the compensation amount has been given to the family members of the deceased and injured?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) In this accident 23 persons lost their lives, 15 were grievously injured and 9 others sustained simple injuries. Inquiry by the Commissioner of Railway Safety, North Eastern Circle has been ordered to establish the cause and the responsibility behind this accident. Central Bureau of Investigation has also been requested to take up investigation of the sequence of events leading to this unfortunate accident and after considering all the police cases registered in this matter to unravel the truth.

(c) and (d) An ex-gratia amount of Rs.5 lakhs to the next of kin of each deceased passenger, Rs. 1 lakh to each grievously injured and Rs. 10,000 to each simple injured passenger has been declared. Besides this, they are also entitled to claim compensation. Compensation is paid only after a claim is filed before the Railway Claims Tribunal and a decree is awarded. No compensation claim has been filed so far in Railway Claims Tribunal for this accident.

Storage facility for agro products

†131. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that agro products get wasted on a large scale due to lack of cold storages;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the system in place for storing agro products and whether Government finds any fault in this system; and

(d) the steps Government is going to take, at the earliest, for making sufficient arrangement to store agro products so that these products do not get wasted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. An Expert Committee was constituted by the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation during 1998 to review the cold storages facilities in the country and assess the requirement of additional capacity etc. with a view to minimize the post harvest losses. The estimated loss of food grains ranges from 8% to 10% and for fruits and vegetables; the loss is estimated between 25% to 30% due to the lack of adequate infrastructure including cold storages.

(c) and (d) (i) A scheme on 'Capital Investment Subsidy for Construction/ Modemization/ Expansion of Cold Storage and Storage for Horticulture Produce' has been launched in 1999 for implementation through National Horticulture Board (NHB). Under this Scheme, credit-linked back-ended subsidy is provided @ 33.33% of the project cost with a maximum ceiling of Rs. 60.00 lakh for North Eastern and Himalayan States and @ 25% with maximum limit of Rs. 50.00 lakhs to other States inclufting rural and backward regions. The Government also launched two Centrally Sponsored Schemes for the development of horticulture viz. 'Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand (TMNE) and 'National Horticulture Mission' (NHM) under which assistance is also provided for construction of cold storages adopting the same norms as above. The assistance under TMNE is routed through NHB. As per the report of the Task Force on Development of Cold Chain in India' set up during 2007, as on December 2006, there were 5101 cold storages in the country with a total capacity of 21.7 Million MTs.

(ii) A credit-linked back-ended scheme on Capital Investment Subsidy for Construction/Renovation of Rural Godown has been launched in 2001 with the objectives for creation of scientific storage capacity with allied facilities in rural areas to meet out various requirements of farmers for storing farm produce, processed farm produce, etc. Under this scheme, subsidy @ 25% is given to all categories of farmers, agriculture graduates, cooperatives & Central Warehousing Corporations/ State Warehousing Corporations. All other categories of individuals, companies and corporations are eligible for subsidy @ 15% of the project cost. Subsidy @ 33.33% is given in the case of North Eastern States/hilly areas & SC/ST entrepreneurs and their cooperatives as well as women farmers.

(iii) The Department of Food and Public Distribution also promotes storage facilities through Food Corporation of India (FCI), Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) and State Warehousing Corporations (SWC). As on 1.10.2009, the storage capacity available with FCI, CWC and SWCs are 27.78 Million MTs, 10.59 Million MTs and 21.95 Million MTs respectively.